

Remarks

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-mentioned Official Action in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 4-12 are now pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 12 being independent. Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled without prejudice. Claims 1, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 have been amended herein.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication that Claims 3-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In keeping with this indication of allowable subject matter, Applicant has amended Claim 1 to include the features of Claim 3 and intervening Claim 2, and consequently this claim is believed to be in condition for allowance. In addition, independent Claim 12 has been amended to include similar features as Claim 1, but in method form. Claim 12 should also be allowed.

The Office Action set forth rejections of Claims 1, 2 and 10-12 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103. Claims 2 and 3 have been cancelled, and the remaining claims are seen to be in condition for allowance for the reasons noted above. The foregoing actions have been taken without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and without conceding correctness of the rejections, but rather strictly to obtain an earlier allowance and to expedite issuance.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objections and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", is written over a horizontal line.

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